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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8991

INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN PRIORITY 0706

RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2619

RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 8929

RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2755

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001960

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/14/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [XF](#) [LE](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY SUPPORTS SPANISH ESDP MISSION FOR LEBANON;
DISAPPOINTED WITH SYRIA

REF: A. SECSTATE 128335

[1](#)B. ROME 1949

Classified By: A/Political Minister Counselor Jonathan R. Cohen for reasons 1.4 b and d

[1](#)1. (C) Poloff delivered ref A points on U.S. support for an ESDP Lebanon border assistance mission to MFA Lebanon/Syria desk officer Michelle Tomassi September 13. Poloff stressed that any EU work to help secure the Lebanon-Syria border be Lebanon oriented and include as little engagement with Syria as possible, and emphasized our opposition to any technical assistance to Syria without the presence of international monitors. Tomassi shared with poloff a copy of Moratinos' proposal, and noted that it coupled equipment with a mission by EU experts, training and an offer to have the experts play a monitoring role as well. Tomassi doubted the Syrians would consent to any international presence on the Syrian side of the border, but said the GOI was prepared to support the Spanish proposal.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Tomassi added that the GOI had been disappointed with Syrian VP al-Shara's recent visit to Rome. Contrary to FM D'Alema's explanation that the Pope had invited al-Shara to Rome (ref B), Tomassi asserted that the Syrians had led Italy to believe al-Shara would carry an important message to Rome containing significant positive developments on Lebanon. That is why, Tomassi said, the GOI agreed to meet with him. D'Alema had been very firm with al-Shara on Lebanon, Iraq and Hamas, but al-Shara had no particular message to deliver.
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